Chapter 4: Plan Elements

A. IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENT

Challenges

The general plan is the policy guide for city development and renewal. If the interlinked set of goals, objectives, and policies are to work effectively, there must be a system for the plan's orderly administration and maintenance. The approach to establishing this system of management is strongly influenced by local resources, the quality of decision making, and legal requirements. Properly managed, the general plan can serve as an effective and manageable policy document for many years after its adoption.

Direction

Implementation of the general plan is the responsibility of the city. Such powers rest with the city's charge to protect the public health, safety, and general welfare of its citizens and are regulatory in nature. Examples include zoning and subdivision regulations, park and school dedications, housing and building regulations, code enforcement, environmental review, and design review.

The Zoning Ordinance and its related maps are specific statements of current land use regulations. Zoning is one of the most important tools for implementing the land use policies in the general plan. It operates as a staging mechanism, gradually moving from current land use patterns to those envisioned in the general plan. Other important implementing tools at the city's disposal include the use of community, specific, and special issue plans. For example, community plans further refine the broad general plan goals and policies for use at the community level through specific land use policy and implementation programs.

The general plan is also administered through the city's budgetary process. City departments assigned with implementing the general plan propose work programs and budget requests designed to meet plan objectives. The city's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) is another valuable tool for administering the plan. The CIP establishes the city's priorities for capital expenditures while being consistent with the plan.

The city's general plan implementation program consists of four major components: establishing an implementation program; submitting an annual status report; comprehensively updating the zoning ordinance; and preparing periodic comprehensive plan updates as necessary.

Implementation Program: The general plan contains many policies and proposals which provide new direction for the city and will require that the council establish priorities, staffing, and funding commitments in order to implement. This is especially important as related to preparation of community and/or specific plans for the Southeast Growth Area (Appendix G) and for revitalization and enhancement of the established urban core communities.

Annual Status Report: The city staff will prepare an annual status report on the general plan. At that time, plan policies are reviewed and offered for amendment if appropriate. Implementation activities are closely reviewed and recommended for revision if necessary. The report is an instrument for identifying needed planning studies and summarizing amendment activity.

Zoning Ordinance Update: Because the zoning ordinance is the primary tool for implementation of the general plan, its update is closely tied to the Implementation Program adopted by the city council. Many of the policies in the plan (mixed use, land use intensity, principles of the "Landscape of Choice") will require corresponding implementing districts in the zoning ordinance.

General Plan Update: More frequent updates of the general plan will allow the council and staff to adequately plan for and reflect local, state, and national trends in land use, the economy, and the environment. Update of the general plan will be closely tied to results of the annual status report regarding progress of implementation programs and plan amendment activity.

Relationship to General Plan Goals

Policies of the Implementation Element support all of the goals of the general plan. As the implementation program is adopted and annual status reports prepared, the city will be able to monitor its progress in attaining goals of the plan. Changes and new direction can then be made either in individual amendments or in the periodic comprehensive updates of the plan.

A-1. OBJECTIVE: On an ongoing basis, monitor and maintain the effectiveness of the general plan with respect to city conditions and priorities.

A-1-a. Policy: Within 90 days of the adoption of the 2025 Fresno General Plan, the mayor and city council shall jointly convene to develop a general plan implementation program. The program must be approved by the mayor and city council within 180 days of adoption of the general plan and consist of a prioritization of plan objectives and accompanying implementation measures, and a procedure to annually review, incorporate, and allocate the priority implementation measures into the city's budget.

A-1-b. Policy: The mayor will annually make a "Status of the General Plan Report" to the city council. The report will contain a performance evaluation of the plan and an implementation progress report. It should recommend any needed objective and policy refinements that need to be initiated by the city council.

A-1-c. Policy: Comprehensively update the general plan every five years.

A-1-d. Policy: Give high priority to the implementation of the initiatives and action strategies of the "Vision 2010 for Downtown Fresno" project as endorsed by the Redevelopment Agency and City Council in March 2002.

A-1-e. Policy: Give high priority to the immediate comprehensive updating of the city's Zoning Ordinance to implement the objectives of the general plan. The update shall provide for an expedited administrative procedure for rezonings consistent with adopted plans.

A-1-f. Policy: Give high priority to preparation of community plan and/or specific plan documents for the proposed Southeast Growth Area (conceptually shown in Appendix G) and for established urban core communities including the centre city, Central Plan Area and traditional downtown.

A-1-g. Policy: Give appropriate priority to the study and specific delineation of intensity corridors and activity centers as conceptually shown on the Urban Form Components Map (Exhibit 6).

A-1-h. Policy: Establish an integrated land use and transportation implementation program that utilizes the intensity corridors and activity centers as conceptually shown on the Urban Form Components Map that will be linked by a public transportation system (including pursuit of fixed guideway systems such as a monorail or people mover) with the highest frequency and level of service economically and technologically feasible within the 20-plus year planning horizon of this plan (see Exhibits 6 and 8).

B. REGIONAL COOPERATION ELEMENT

Challenges

The City of Fresno is one of several jurisdictions with planning and land use authority located in the greater Fresno metropolitan area. The city is located in Fresno County which is bounded to the north by Madera County. The City of Clovis is immediately adjacent to Fresno's northeastern boundaries. Other cities which could be affected include Madera to the north and Sanger to the southeast.

Regional cooperation is a complex issue, especially in regions such as the Central San Joaquin Valley where rapid population growth has diminished the role of local control and self-determination. The Fresno metropolitan area is a dynamic, growing urban area and growth issues do not respect jurisdictional boundaries. Major regional issues relevant to the Fresno metropolitan area include land use planning, transportation/circulation, air quality, loss of prime agricultural land, and public services. This Regional Cooperation Element identifies broad objectives and policies for regional coordination.

The City of Fresno will encourage, participate in and promote cooperation in land use planning, transportation, urban services, and environmental issues among all local jurisdictions. It is the city's position, however, that this effort will only succeed if all neighboring governments make the same commitment to regional cooperation.